

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LUANDA 00894 190907Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LUANDA 894

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR AO

SUBJ: BIOGRAPHIC REPORT ON ADMIRAL ANTONIO ALVA ROSA COUTINHO

REF: STATE 222721

1. THERE FOLLOW KEY ITEMS ON ADMIRAL ROSA COUTINHO. COMPLETE
BIO DATA FOLLOWS BY AIRGRAM.

2. ANTONIO ALVA ROSA COUTINHO. BORN FEBRUARY 14, 1926 IN LISBON.
ATTENDED THE ESCOLA NAVAL 1944-1947. HAS SPENT HIS ENTIRE CAREER
IN THE NAVY. PRIOR SERVICE IN ANGOLA WITH A HYDROGRAPHIC MISSION.
HE HAS SPENT TIME IN THE U.S. STUDYING HYDROGRAPHY AND OCEANO-
GRAPHY. THE ADMIRAL IS MARRIED AND HAS FOUR CHILDREN, THREE OF
WHOM ARE STUDYING IN PORTUGAL. HIS WIFE COMES FROM MOZAMBIQUE
AND SPEAKS EXCELLENT ENGLISH. ALTHOUGH THE ADMIRAL HAS HAD
NO FORMAL TRAINING IN EITHER ENGLISH OR FRENCH HE HANDLES BOTH
LANGUAGES COMPETENTLY. IMPRISONED FOR SIX MONTHS IN 1961 BY
THE CONGOLESE WHILE ON A TRIP ON THE CONGO RIVER.

3. AS FOR THE ADMIRAL'S POLITICAL BELIEFS, THEY ARE NOT A MATTER
OF RECORD HERE. HE IS DEFINITELY FRIENDLY TO THE UNITED STATES.
HE WAS INVITED TO JOIN THE ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT (MFA) AFTER THE
APRIL 25 COUP AND BECAME A MEMBER OF THE JUNTA DE SALVACAO
NACIONAL THE SAME DAY. COUTINHO IS THOUGHT BY SOME ANGOLAN
WHITES TO BE A COMMUNIST, A TAG HE SEEMS TO HAVE PICKED UP IN
LISBON. HE DOES NOT APPEAR TO US TO BE A LEFTIST; HE IS LIBERAL
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PAGE 02 LUANDA 00894 190907Z

ON THE QUESTION OF INDEPENDENCE FOR ANGOLA, HOWEVER, WHICH IS

ENOUGH TO MAKE HIM ANATHEMA TO MANY WHITES. ADDITIONALLY, HE HAS SEEN THE GREATEST THREAT TO ORDERLY PROGRESS TOWARD ANGOLAN INDEPENDENCE AS COMING FROM WHITE EXTREMISTS AND HAS COME DOWN HARD ON THEM AND THE WHITE-CONTROLLED PRESS. HE IS ACCESSIBLE TO ALMOST ALL WHO SEEK AN APPOINTMENT AND DOES NOT HESITATE TO TAKE ON EVEN THE TOUGHEST QUESTIONS. HE GIVES THE IMPRESSION OF OPENNESS AND TRIES TO BE STRAIGHTFORWARD IN HIS DEALINGS; STILL, HE SELDOM GIVES DETAILS OF HIS ACTIVITIES OR THINKING, BUT PREFERS TO TALK IN GENERAL TERMS. HE IS A GOOD SOLDIER AND CAN BE COUNTED UPON TO CARRY OUT ORDERS. HE GETS ON WELL WITH THE YOUNGER MEMBERS HERE OF THE MFA AND ALWAYS TAKES THEIRS VIEWS INTO ACCOUNT. THE ADMIRAL AND HIS FELLOW JUNTA MEMBERS HAVE BEEN CRITICIZED FOR NOT PAYING MORE ATTENTION TO ANGOLAN ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND IT IS TRUE THAT ALMOST OF ALL OF THEIR EFFORTS ARE BENT TOWARD OBTAINING A CEASE FIRE WITH ALL LIBERATION GROUPS, GETTING ALL OF THEM INTO A PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT AND DISENGAGING PORTUGUESE FORCES.

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